

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 CU-04 EB-11 COME-00

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SUBJECT: REFOCUSING U.S. IMAGE

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REF: MOSCOW 15977

1. SUMMARY. SEVERAL COMMENTS PICKED UP ON PRESS FRONT
HELP BRING INTO FOCUS VARIED SOVIET MEDIA TREATMENT OF
U.S. IMAGE AT YEAR'S END. WHILE SLAMS AT "MASSCULT"
CONTINUE AND REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT DIVINED IN DISSATISFIED
YOUTH AND WORKERS, WORD IS OUT NOT TO OVERPLAY CONGRES-
SIONAL ANTI-MFN VOTE OR EVEN POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL DEPARTURE.
AT SAME TIME, IDEA OF "CATCHING UP" WITH WESTERN CONSUMERISM
MAY BE TAKING ON NEW GLOW WITH WIDELY-NOTED EFFECTS OF ENERGY
CRISIS. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH CORRESPONDENT REPORTS SOVIET PRESS TOLD JUST
BEFORE CONGRESS TRADE BILL VOTE QTE TO SHOW RESTRAINT UNQTE
OVER EXPECTED ANTI-MFN AND CREDITS VOTE. COMMENTARIES
CONTINUE IN MAIN TO CONCLUDE ON REASONABLE NOTE SHOWN IN
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LATEST NEW TIMES (NO. 51, DEC 21), WITH U.S. PRESS CITED

IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL GOSPEL THAT INCREASED TRADE OF VALUE
FOR BOTH NATIONS.

3. CORRESPONDENT REPORTEDLY ALSO TOLD BY MFA OFFICIALS THAT SOVIETS BEGINNING TO CONSIDER WHAT LIFE MIGHT BE LIKE IF PRESIDENT NIXON LEFT OFFICE. SUPPOSEDLY THEY ARE REASSURED BY STRENGTH OF KISSINGER CONNECTION, ALTHOUGH MINCULT OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF AT MFA RECEPTION THAT ABSENCE OF PRESIDENT WOULD BE GREAT LOSS HE DID NOT WANT TO THINK ABOUT.

4. IN ALTERNATING APPROACH TO U.S. IMAGE, PREACHY DIATRIBES ON SERIOUS SOCIAL CONTRADICTIONS THAT SQUEEZE WESTERNERS ARE BALANCED SOMEWHAT BY SWEET REASON PIECES LIKE MATVEYEV'S IN DEC 24 IZVESTIYA. BASED ON MEETINGS WITH ARENA STAGE TROUPE RETURNING FROM SOVIET UNION TOUR, TOP BUSINESSMEN AND CABDRIVER, PLUS TRADITIONAL SEN. FULBRIGHT STATEMENT AND HOSANNAS GIVEN GUEST SOVIET CONDUCTOR AT PHILADELPHIA SYMPHONY CONCERT, MATVEYEV FINDS GROUNDSWELL OF SUPPORT AMONG MILLIONS OF AMERICANS FOR CONCLUSION THAT ONLY (AND NOW UNACCEPTABLE) ALTERNATIVE TO CONTINUING COOPERATION WITH USSR IS RETURN TO COLD WAR. LACK OF MFN GETS ONCE-OVER-LIGHTLY, AND CHARLES YOST IS CITED ON NEED TO HOLD US-USSR SUMMIT YEARLY. FYI, ABOVE

MINCULT OFFICIAL, WHO HAS PLAYED PREPARATORY ROLE IN PREVIOUS SUMMITS, SAID PREPARATIONS ALREADY UNDERWAY FOR APRIL MEETING IN MOSCOW.

5. ON CULTURAL FRONT, WITH BREATHING SPACE UNTIL CSCE RESUMES IN MID-JANUARY, DEC 14 NEW TIMES FIRMLY PUT DOWN "MASSCULT" IN TRADITIONAL TERMS WHILE SUCH STANDARD BEARERS OF COMMUNIST MORALITY AS LITGAZ, SOVIETSKAYA KULTURA AND KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA MISS FEW OPPORTUNITIES TO GRAPHICALLY POINT OUT VIOLENCE AND VICES PROTRAYED IN U.S. TV AND FILMS. AMERICAN YOUTH, MEANWHILE, IN WORDS OF PRAVDA'S TOLKUNOV, CONTINUES TO SEEK AND STRIVE FOR NEW ANSWERS.

6. A MORE FLEXIBLE VIEW, PERHAPS ANTICIPATING A SWING TO OFFENSE ON HUMAN CONTACT QUESTION NEXT YEAR (REFTEL), IS PRESENTED IN DECEMBER HURNALIST MAGAZINE BY IZVESTIYA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICAL OBSERVER VLADIMIR OSIPOV. WHILE DEFINING WESTERN CULTURE AS QTE FREE ENTERPRISE IN NAME OF PRIVATE PROFITS UNQTE VERSUS SOCIALISM'S QTE ALL IN NAME OF MAN, UNQTE HE CONCEDES WORTH NOT ONLY TRADITIONAL BENCHMARKS LIKE HEMINGWAY, LA SCALA AND BOSTON SYMPHONY BUT ALSO ACKNOWLEDGES QTE ENTERTAINMENT UNQTE VALUE OF ARMSTRONG, PIAF, JOHN LE CARRE, BEST HOLLYWOOD FILMS AND CHAPLIN. AT SAME TIME, OSIPOV NOTES QTE NATURAL UNQTE SHARPENING OF

IDEOLOGICAL FIGHT WITH PROGRESS OF DETENTE, SO WATCH OUT FOR
WESTERN QTE CULT OF THE COLT UNQTE AND MINDLESS TWIGGIES.

7. OLD IDEA OF CATCHING UP WITH WEST, STRETCHING BACK TO
PETER THE GREAT, MAY BE STEPPED UP BY PRODUCTION FALLOUT IN
WEST DUE TO ENERGY SHORTAGE. PUNDIT-JOURNALIST VIKTOR
LOUIS, JUST BACK FROM DIMMED STREETS OF PARIS, TOLD EMBOFF
DEC 21 QTE THE CHAMPS ELYSEES LOOKS LIKE GORKY STREET.
UNQTE LOUIS PURSUED WITH UNUSUAL ARDOR NOTION THAT IF
WEST COOLED OFF FOR FEW YEARS, SOVIETS COULD MAKE
PROGRESS TOWARD OVERALL PARITY. THIS, HE ARGUED, WOULD
BE MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS IN CREATING MORE BALANCED
EVERYDAY SITUATION. WHILE PRAVDA EDITORIAL FOLLOWING
DAY EXHORTING GREATER SOCIALIST PRODUCTON MADE NO
MENTION OF TAKING ON WEST, POINT AT LEAST IMPLICIT IN
WIDE-SPREAD REPORTING ON ENERGY CRISIS AND MAY BECOME
EXPLICIT IN LAST TWO YEARS OF FIVE-YEAR PLAN AS EXTRA
INCENTIVE.SOMMERLATTE

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